



## DOWNTOWN-CHINATOWN NEIGHBORHOOD BOARD № 13

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### **REGULAR MEETING MINUTES THURSDAY 3 SEPTEMBER 2020 VIRTUAL WEBEX MEETING**

CALL TO ORDER: Chair Kevin Lye called the meeting to order at 6:02 pm. **A quorum was established with seven members present.** (Note: This nine-member Board requires five members to establish quorum and to take official Board action.)

Members Present: Robert Armstrong, Roxie-Anne Kamoshida, Kevin Lye, Sandy Ma, Kevin McDonald, Willis Moore and Dolores Mollring.

Members Absent: James Logue and Chu Lan Shubert-Kwock.

Guests: Chief Socrates Bratakos and Captain Sean Arakaki (Honolulu Fire Department); Garrick Iwamuro (Mayor Kirk Caldwell's representative); Councilmember Carol Fukunaga, Kimberly Ribellia, and Janelle Nomura; Glen Young (Senator Karl Rhoads' representative); Shawn Hamamoto (Honolulu Authority for Rapid Transportation); Lee Stack (Chinatown Improvement District); Greg Payton and Dorene Toutant (Mental Health Kokua), Fran Butera (Chinatown Watch), Eric Wong (Kekaulike Courtyard); Mark Tarone (Hawaii Halloween LLC); Rann Watumull and Danny Kim (River of Life); Bill Comerford, Ernest Carvalho, Gerald Clay, Mark Luppino, Christine Trecker, Robert Greenberg, Cici Fong, Chuck Bussler, Ave Kwok, Travis Saito, Frances Oshiro, Aaron Huba, Laura Sturges, Paul Winston, Gerald Clay, Kent Yang, Anna Lin, Jamie Brown, and James Langworthy (Residents); Jackson Coley (Neighborhood Commission Office). **Name was not included if not recognized or discernible from the list of WebEx participants.**<sup>a</sup>

#### INTRODUCTION OF BOARD MEMBERS

Chair Lye outlined the rules of speaking for the virtual meeting and how attendees can indicate when they want to ask questions or contribute to discussion. The Board members introduced themselves to the assembly.

#### ESTABLISHMENT OF TELEPRESENCE OPERATIONAL PARAMETERS

Chair Lye reported that he received guidance from the State Office of Information Practices (OIP) regarding virtual meetings. Chair Lye suggested a motion to form a contingency plan in the event that the person(s) operating the provided telepresence platform experience technical difficulties. Chair Lye suggested that Kamoshida operate the meeting if Chair Lye lost the connection, followed in succession by Jackson Coley, Neighborhood Commission Office (NCO), if Kamoshida subsequently lost the connection. Time would be permitted for the Chair or acting Chair to rejoin the meeting without immediate adjournment of such.

**McDonald moved the Motion to abide by the rules suggested by Chair Lye. The Motion WAS ADOPTED by UNANIMOUS VOTE, 7-0-0 (AYE: Armstrong, Kamoshida, Ma, McDonald, Moore, Mollring, and Lye; NAY: None; ABSTAIN: None).**

**Mollring noted that she may need to depart from the meeting.**

#### PUBLIC SAFETY REPORTS

Honolulu Fire Department (HFD): No representative was yet available at this time.

Honolulu Police Department (HPD): Chair Lye noted that Lt. Taniguchi was not able to attend the meeting this evening but that any concerns voiced for HPD at this time would be collected and relayed onward for review.

Neighborhood Citizen Patrol: Chair Lye reported that the patrol remains active while maintaining recommended health and safety precautions. Images of litter, broken windows, potholes, and an unexpected near-blockade at the Fort Street Mall side

<sup>a</sup> As the City and County discourage pre-registration for telepresence meetings, no attestations can be made regarding the true identities of participants based solely on self-provided meeting-entry information or email addresses who did not speak and self-identify during the event.

of the 1132 Bishop Street construction site were displayed. The patrol departs every Tuesday at 8:00 pm from the Diamond Head tower lobby of Kukui Plaza. Chair Lye invited residents to wear a mask and join the patrol.

#### ELECTED OFFICIALS

Governor David Ige's Representative: No representative was present; the latest *Capitol Connection* newsletter had been circulated by the Chair to the Board. Chair Lye offered to relay concerns and questions.

Questions, comments, and concerns followed:

1. Budget Cuts: Ma inquired if an announced 10% to 20% budget cut from the administration would affect funding for the Homeless Coordinator's Office and how this would affect homeless in Downtown–Chinatown.
2. Closing Businesses: McDonald requested information outlining why local businesses were closed due to COVID-19. McDonald voiced concerns regarding the closures and advocated reopening businesses. McDonald requested a re-opening plan from the Governor.

City Councilmember Carol Fukunaga: Councilmember Fukunaga spoke to a newsletter provided to the Board and reported the following:

- HFD: HFD responded to questions from Councilmember Fukunaga's office. The response was attached to the newsletter.
- Vagrancy: Councilmember Fukunaga stated that her office has received multiple complaints regarding vagrancy in Downtown–Chinatown.
- Union Mall: Union Mall was acquired by Douglass Emmett, Inc., which is working with the City on an application for 201H exemptions; the application is expected at the City Council soon.<sup>b</sup>
- Fort Street Mall: The City Department of Planning and Permitting (DPP) and the Managing Director's Office support the request to remove payphones from kiosks along Fort Street Mall. The Fort Street Business Improvement District Association will assume control of the kiosks, which could be then used for beautification projects.

Questions, comments, and concerns followed:

1. Honolulu Liquor Commission (HLC): McDonald voiced concerns regarding HLC requiring bars to pay full price for liquor licenses despite bars having to close for COVID-19. McDonald inquired about HLC's plans regarding upcoming budget cuts. Councilmember Fukunaga responded that there will be a series of resolutions with the City Council next week regarding financial relief for small businesses.

**Member MacDonald moved to provide an additional five minutes for discussion regarding items apropos to Councilmember Fukunaga; the motion passed without objection.**

2. Landlord/Tenant Resolution: Resident Bill Comerford voiced concerns regarding having to close his bars for multiple months with inadequate assistance from the government. Resident Comerford advocated a landlord/tenant resolution to help local businesses by helping them pay their rent. Resident Comerford inquired and Councilmember Fukunaga responded that the Special Council meeting regarding relief resolutions will be on Wednesday 9 September 2020 at 10:00 am.

Mayor's Representative: Garrick Iwamuro, Department of Enterprise Services (DES), reported the following:

- Rent Relief Program for Bars: Responding to previous inquiries, the Mayor's Office (MAY) responded that Mayor Caldwell has created the individual assistance and small business relief programs to help individuals and businesses cope with the impacts of COVID-19. To learn more, visit [www.OneOahu.org](http://www.OneOahu.org).
- Downtown–Chinatown COVID-19 Funds: Responding to previous inquiries, MAY responded that residents seeking financial assistance should visit [www.OneOahu.org](http://www.OneOahu.org) to access all the resources available, as well as frequently asked questions and a live dashboard to learn more about the impacts of COVID-19 on O'ahu.
- Sidewalk Power Washing: Responding to previous inquiries, the Department of Facility Maintenance (DFM) responded that a crew from Division of Road Maintenance's Clean Team pressure washes sidewalks in the Downtown–Chinatown area twice a week as personnel and resources are available. The crew used to schedule the area in a systematic approach but due to numerous feces/urine/odor complaints, the pressure washing schedule has become

<sup>b</sup> See <https://dlnr.hawaii.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/D-8.pdf>; accessed 18 September 2020.

more complaint/emergency based. A City contractor managed by Jeanne Ishikawa is also providing nightly pressure washing in the Downtown–Chinatown area. The State also provided two pressure washers to private downtown businesses to be used to perform regular pressure washing in the area.

- Move Homeless out of Downtown–Chinatown: Responding to previous inquiries, DFM responded that their Stored Property Ordinance Branch conducts regular inspections of the Downtown–Chinatown area for the enforcement of illegally stored items on City property and sidewalk areas in accordance with City ordinances. Relocation of homeless individuals to shelters or temporary housing that would move the homeless from the Downtown–Chinatown streets is being performed through coordination with the Office of Housing (HOU) and other community support-group agencies.
- River of Life Mission: Responding to previous inquiries, HOU responded that the City and County of Honolulu currently has no authority over River of Life Mission (RoL). For any inquiries or questions, please contact RoL on (808) 524-7656. The Institute for Human Services (IHS) at 350 Sumner Street is now serving brunch (9–10 am) and dinner (5–6 pm) on-site daily to assist in feeding the unsheltered. For more information please contact IHS on (808) 447-2900.
- Cameras: Responding to previous inquires, the Department of Information Technology (DIT) responded that HPD owns and manages the cameras in Chinatown. HPD has been trying to find funding to upgrade 26 cameras since most of the current ones are offline due to age and lack of maintenance.

**Member MacDonald moved to provide an additional five minutes for discussion regarding items apropos to the Mayor’s representative; the motion passed without objection.**

Questions, comments, and concerns followed:

1. Cameras: Armstrong noted that previous reports regarding cameras stated that funding was available and HPD was searching for a vendor. Armstrong voiced concerns regarding the contradiction between the earlier and current reports.
2. Pressure Washing: McDonald voiced gratitude for pressure washing but voiced concerns regarding washings being a temporary measure. McDonald stated that addressing the homeless would be a better way to resolve the issue.
3. Kekaulike Courtyard: Eric Wong, Kekaulike Courtyard building manager, voiced concerns regarding power washings at 1:00 am, interrupting residents’ sleep. Resident Wong requested that power washing be done earlier in the day to avoid waking up residents.
4. Maunakea Street: Fran Butera, Chinatown Watch, requested a power washing schedule for Maunakea Street.
5. Safety Concerns: Butera voiced safety concerns regarding the Ewa side of River Street. Butera voiced concerns regarding unaddressed criminal activity.
6. Sidewalk Jurisdiction: Resident Ernest Carvalho inquired who is responsible for oversight of individuals loitering or doing other illegal activities on sidewalks—specifically, if this was the responsibility of the City or of local businesses.

**Member MacDonald moved to provide an additional five minutes for discussion regarding items apropos to the Mayor’s representative; the Motion WAS ADOPTED 7-0-0 (AYE: Armstrong, Kamoshida, Ma, McDonald, Mollring, Moore, Lye; NAY: None; ABSTAIN: None).**

7. Bar Closures: Resident Comerford inquired why bars were ordered to close and how these decisions were made. Resident Comerford also voiced concerns regarding inspectors coming to his business for 14 days due to a complaint which was not shared with him. Iwamuro responded he was unsure and agreed to check.
8. Parks: McDonald voiced concerns regarding parks and other outdoor areas being closed.

State Senator Karl Rhoads: Glen Young spoke to a report provided to the Board and opened the floor to questions.

Questions, comments, and concerns followed:

1. Quarantine: McDonald inquired and Young confirmed that Senator Rhoads is currently off-island and will quarantine when he returns to Hawaii.
2. Census: Ma reminded the assembly to complete the 2020 Census by the end of September 2020.

State House Representative Scott Saiki: No representative was present; a written report had been provided to the Board.

State House Representative Daniel Holt: No representative was present; no report was provided.

#### PUBLIC CONCERNS

Gerald Clay: Resident Gerald Clay introduced himself to the assembly and stated that he practices law, has a law firm in downtown Honolulu, and wants to reinvent government in Hawaii. Clay advocated changing government through a process of partnering, which was described as a structure to examine how to solve problems and communicate. Clay encouraged meeting participants to learn more at [www.HIMediation.com](http://www.HIMediation.com).

Safe Haven: Greg Payton spoke to a report already shared with the Board and emphasized that 87 homeless individuals with mental illnesses were placed into housing between January and August 2020, the Punawai Rest Stop served 800 new guests recently and has had over 54,000 visits in so far for 2020, and that the Activity Drop-In Center on Pauahi Street is currently closed and will likely remain closed until December 2020. Safe Haven has requested that the City keep the outside restrooms closed during this time; the Punawai Rest Stop remains open. COVID-19 testing has been conducted at both facilities and buildings have been sanitized; staff have received regular testing. Guests can receive testing by contacting Doreen at the Punawai Rest Stop. For more information, please email [gpayton@mhkhawaii.org](mailto:gpayton@mhkhawaii.org).

Opposition to River of Life (RoL): Resident Carvalho noted that RoL attracts a group of people to the community which has caused disturbances and nuisances. Carvalho advocated enacting a nuisance law against RoL, and voiced concerns regarding unclothed people causing a nuisance in the community and performing lewd acts in public. Carvalho advocated moving all services to the Punawai Rest Stop.

Community Gardens: Resident Mark Luppino identified himself as a community gardener and advocated reopening the community gardens with masks and social-distancing adherence. Luppino noted that gardening could be performed safely and provides a means for exercise and food security to residents; he voiced concerns regarding non-authorized individuals entering the gardens (ostensibly to pilfer food) while they remain closed. Luppino requested that the Board forward his concerns to MAY to reopen the gardens.

Chinatown Improvement District (CID): Lee Stack reported that CID continues its roving community patrols, which note increases in vandalism, broken windows, and physical assaults; Stack advocated using CARES funding for enforcement and intervention in Chinatown. The stakeholder advisory group to the City Council's Economic Assistance and Revitalization Committee issued its first interim report; proposals from the group include community assistance hubs, health coverage, streamlining and augmenting funding for the small business recovery fund, workforce retraining, and securing more funding for intervention and diversion programs working with chronic and resistant homeless. For more information, please visit the CID website at [www.cidchinatownhawaii.org](http://www.cidchinatownhawaii.org) or email [chinatownimprovementdistrict@gmail.com](mailto:chinatownimprovementdistrict@gmail.com).

#### NEW BUSINESS

Downtown–Chinatown Fire Station Relocation: Socrates Bratakos, HFD Assistant Chief of Planning and Development, provided a presentation and reported the following:

- New Fire Station: The HFD is working towards constructing a new fire station to service the Downtown–Chinatown area. HFD is currently examining potential locations; the station is planned to provide service for 50 to 100 years. This project is in its earliest phases and a new station in this area is not expected for roughly 10 years, as other fire stations must be constructed first. An Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) will be performed and the community will be updated.
- Area of Coverage: Fire Station 1 in Downtown–Chinatown covers the area from the ocean to the lower slopes of Punchbowl and from Richard Street to Sumner Street in Iwilei. HFD is looking for a location which allows provision of service to the entire area.
- Historic Building: The current fire station is over 80 years old, and a larger complex will be needed to meet future demand. The current station is a historic building which limits how it can be altered and updated.
- Potential Location: Although HFD has located one potential location which is now a parking lot approximately one block from the Smith–Beretania Mini Park, HFD has no intention to use any park space for this project. HFD will be considering various locations throughout this process. Final designs might include affordable housing over the new HFD facility.

Questions, comments, and concerns followed:

1. Park Concerns: Armstrong noted that multiple residents were concerned that park land would be taken and expressed gratitude for not affecting the parks. Armstrong inquired why the public concerns arose, where the process for the new station is, and what will be done with the old fire station. Chief Bratakos responded that residents misread the conceptual map which made it appear the new fire station would be at the park. HFD is looking at repairing the historical doors of Fire Station 1, and possibly subsuming Kamali'i Mini Park. HFD has an executive order from the Kingdom of Honolulu allowing HFD to use the site in perpetuity. If DPR transfers the mini-park to HFD they can remodel the building and park. Meanwhile, HFD is looking at new fire station locations.

**Member MacDonald moved to provide an additional ten minutes for discussion regarding items apropos to the fire station; the motion passed without objection.**

**Chair Lye passed the gavel to Vice Chair Kamoshida at 7:42 pm.**

2. Suggested Locations: Lye noted that it had been emphasized within the message accompanying the 2020/PIM-1 paperwork from DPP that despite the arbitrary location of the fire station symbol on the provided maps, the "anticipated area for relocation is near the planned rail transit corridor." He further noted that the Citizen Patrol had contemplated and scouted several potential alternative locations for a relocated fire station and provided a presentation demonstrating maps and photos of open lots at 377 N. King Street and 888 Nu'uaniu Avenue, the former of which is an eyesore. Lye noted that he had drafted a resolution about such which the Board could consider at a future meeting. Chief Bratakos initially responded that 888 Nu'uaniu may be within a flood zone, and 377 N. King Street may be too close to Iwilei; additional study is needed. He requested a copy of the presentation.
3. Current Station: Stack suggested expanding and adapting the current fire station by using the adjacent Kamali'i Mini Park to add on to the current structure. Chief Bratakos responded that he is fond of the current site and station and is hopeful that the building and park will remain usable in some fashion, and stated that augmenting the current site is an option in addition to finding a new location.
4. Community Meeting: Armstrong echoed the comments of Stack, stated that the 888 Nu'uaniu site might be unavailable in light of rail, and advocated a community meeting to discuss the fire station project.
5. Other HFD Facilities: Chief Bratakos noted that HFD has roughly 50 facilities and reiterated that other projects must be finished before the new fire station in Downtown–Chinatown begins. Chief Bratakos noted that HFD can only afford to build a new station every two to three years and that there will be more opportunities for discussion.

**Vice Chair Kamoshida returned the gavel to Chair Lye at 7:49 pm.**

**Chair Lye returned to prior agenda item Public Safety Reports | Honolulu Fire Department without objection.**

Honolulu Fire Department (HFD): Captain Sean Arakaki reported the following statistics; the HFD tip of the month is available below as an Annex.

- August 2020 Fire Statistics: 7 nuisance fires, 2 cooking fires, 3 activated alarms, 121 medical emergencies, 2 vehicle crashes, and 1 ocean rescue.

**Member Mollring departed the meeting at 7:53 pm; six members present.**

NEW BUSINESS (continued)

Hallowbaloo 2020: Mark Tarone of Hawaii Halloween LLC reported the following:

- Hallowbaloo 2020: Hawaii Halloween LLC began the permitting process for Hallowbaloo 2020 in July 2020 when COVID-19 numbers were lower. Although at this time it is uncertain if Hallowbaloo 2020 will be held, Hawaii Halloween LLC wants to be prepared to hold the event if able. Hallowbaloo is only seeking Board support if it becomes feasible to safely hold the event.
- Changes: Hallowbaloo 2020 is planned to be similar to the 2019 event with two notable changes. A stage which in prior years had played music near Chinatown Gateway Plaza will instead showcase costumes, comedy, or other quieter activities. Sound levels will also be monitored by a professional sound engineer in the crowd with equipment to monitor sound levels and directly lower or mute stages as needed.
- Addressing Complaints: There were no sound complaints received by management or staff during the 2019 event.

After the event an email was received lodging one sound complaint; in direct response to this, the Gateway Plaza stage changed programs and a new method will be used to monitor sound levels. Hallowbaloo is not involved in complaints lodged with HLC.

- Addressing Shubert-Kwock: Regarding an email from Member Chu Lan Shubert-Kwock containing various claims, there was no fraud involved in the 2020 event-notification process and no evidence of fraud has been presented. Tarone stated that signatures were acquired to document that notification was provided. Tarone stated that Hallowbaloo has never received a sound-violation citation.

**Member MacDonald moved to provide an additional ten minutes for discussion regarding items apropos to Hallowbaloo; the motion passed without objection.**

Questions, comments, and concerns followed:

1. Board Action: Armstrong inquired if the Board is expected to take any action. Chair Lye responded that the Board could take action now or wait. Tarone clarified that although the Board is not obligated to take a position, the Department of Transportation Services (DTS) would receive input from the Board and will make a decision on the application next week.
2. Commendation: McDonald commended Tarone's efforts and quality of work.
3. Liabe Party: Chair Lye welcomed Tarone to advise the Board who at Hawaii Halloween LLC would be responsible should problems arise during an event. Tarone responded that three members comprise Hawaii Halloween LLC (Mark Tarone, Michael Galmiche, and Jonathan Mac) and any of them could be contacted. Production manager Galmiche's contact information was also provided to the entire community when notification of the event was provided.
4. Social Distancing: Stack noted that the event map did not appear to address social distancing. Stack also inquired about relocating the event to the Hawaii State Art Museum (HiSAM). Stack noted that HLC only recently obtained equipment to monitor noise violations. Tarone responded that they looked at ways to socially distance and determined it was not feasible; as such, the event will either be held safely in a pre-pandemic fashion or will not be held at all. Tarone stated that although he would like to hold the event at HiSAM, that venue has unique challenges, as events there are costly and usually require booking a national-level entertainer, which is not economically feasible. Tarone noted that they have also received feedback advocating conduction of the event in Chinatown. Tarone reiterated that Hallowbaloo does not have a noise violation on record.

**McDonald moved that Downtown–Chinatown Neighborhood Board № 13 support any future event that Hawaii Halloween LLC would be interested in presenting, provided they come to the Board with details of such. The motion was not seconded and did not progress.**

Progress Towards the Vision of the River of Life (RoL) Board of Directors: Rann Watumull and Danny Kim reported the following:

- Letters: Watumull shared excerpts of letters from guests who benefited from services provided by RoL. The letters praised the work of RoL.
- Mission: RoL has been located in Chinatown for almost 33 years. It is the mission of RoL to change people's lives; feeding them is just the first step. RoL provides about 1000 take-out meals a day right now, in addition to up to 180 meals per day to the HPD Provisional Outdoor Screening and Triage (POST) facility, and nearly 500 food bags twice a month to elderly and low-income residents who are not homeless but require assistance.
- Future Vision: RoL intends to partner with other agencies and churches to serve more meals outside of Chinatown; expanding activities in other communities will also lessen the impact to Chinatown. RoL continues to actively search for a site for operations outside of Chinatown.

Questions, comments, and concerns followed:

1. Restroom facilities: Butera voiced approval regarding RoL's work with individuals, however voiced concerns regarding RoL's size, location, and method of running their operation. Butera voiced concerns regarding homeless people coming to Chinatown for free meals and inquired where these people use the restroom. Watumull clarified that RoL does not bring people to Chinatown; RoL helps people who are already in Chinatown. Watumull agreed that restroom closures have been an issue.
2. Homeless draw: Resident Carvalho voiced disagreement and stated that he has spoken to homeless who came to Chinatown specifically for free meals and resources. Resident Carvalho voiced concerns regarding these individuals

staying in Chinatown and negatively impacting the community. Resident Carvalho voiced concerns regarding some homeless being rapists, killers, and drug users. Watumull responded that RoL does not serve homeless who are disruptive, on drugs, or have known criminal activity. Watumull recommended RoL and the community work together to identify people with such problems and hold them accountable; they are a small subset of the people served by RoL.

3. Continued progress: Chair Lye urged the community and RoL to work together and for RoL to continue to share information about its operations and plans in an effort to permit communication and feedback.
4. Relocation request: Stack advocated for relocation of RoL, stated that similar agencies provide less-frequent services which impact their respective communities less, and noted the use of conditional use permits. Stack voiced additional concerns regarding homeless individuals with substance abuse and mental health illness.

**Member Armstrong moved to provide an additional ten minutes for discussion regarding items apropos to RoL; the motion passed without objection.**

5. Impact of feeding services: Butera voiced concerns regarding RoL's services enabling homeless to remain on the streets on Chinatown. Butera voiced concerns regarding RoL's feeding operation and its destructive impact on Chinatown.
6. COVID-19 Pandemic: Ma inquired if RoL has seen an increase in the need for its services with the COVID-19 pandemic, and if so, if such was quantifiable. Watumull responded affirmatively, specifying that RoL has increased the daily meals served from 600–700 up to 1000 a day due to the pandemic. Watumull stated that RoL has also seen more guests who are not homeless but do require assistance.
7. Redistribution of services: Resident Christine Trecker voiced concerns regarding RoL's food distribution service and advocated spreading such services more evenly throughout Oahu. Watumull voiced agreement and stated that RoL is looking for other areas to serve to lessen the strain on Chinatown. Watumull noted that the pandemic has made it difficult to find new locations; he noted the chocolate factory within the RoL property. Kim stated that he understands other residents' concerns buy comments may be based on personal feelings rather than observational studies. Kim advocated provision of additional support from the City and State to find solutions to homelessness. Kim noted that RoL personnel patrol the streets and perform trash cleanups. Kim noted that RoL is funded solely by private donors.
8. Iwilei: Armstrong inquired about previous plans with RoL and the City to relocate RoL to Iwilei. Watumull responded that the City originally spoke of a 20- to 30-year lease for RoL but instead offered a 123-page, one-year service contract with terms which would have allowed the City to terminate the contract with RoL at any time, even after capital improvement expenses. Watumull stated that guests and volunteers pushed back at this move, as they did not feel safe in Iwilei because of gang activities. Moving to a city-owned property would have exposed RoL to church-and-state lawsuits.

**Chair Lye moved to provide an additional two minutes for discussion regarding items apropos to RoL; the motion passed without objection.**

9. Litter: Resident Eric Wong relayed concerns regarding RoL's recipients littering after receiving food, but affirmed that RoL staff does pick up trash. Watumull encouraged the community to report which individuals litter or are involved in apparent drug deals in an effort to identify the subset of guests who are causing problems. McDonald inquired to whom litterers should be reported, or if RoL could provide someone on-site to whom reports could be made, and recommended that Watumull fill that rôle on regular basis.

**Chair Lye moved to provide an additional five minutes for discussion regarding items apropos to RoL; the motion passed without objection.**

Watumull responded that RoL does have staff available outside every day at the corner of their facility.

10. Responsibilities: Butera stated that she had made a report to a RoL staff member upon observing a suspected drug deal prior to receipt of a meal but was told that RoL could not help what happened with a guest before or after a meal was received. Butera noted that RoL staff were trying harder to take responsibility for the corner regarding trash. Watumull reiterated a willingness to meet with community members, noted that over the past 33 years guests

have changed beneficially, and restated that this remains a complex situation for which RoL wants to be a part of the solution.

**Neighborhood Commission Office staff departed at 9:00 pm.**

COMMUNITY GROUP REPORTS

Honolulu Authority for Rapid Transportation (HART): Shawn Hamamoto spoke to a report already shared with the Board and available in full below as an Annex. Hamamoto addressed questions posed during the August 2020 meeting of NB 13.

- Cayetano families: HART Deputy Director Stephen Cayetano is not related to former Hawaii Governor Ben Cayetano.
- Current budget estimate for the rail project: \$9.005 billion at completion.
- Rail project completion: Operational readiness is targeted for 17 April 2026; the date for passenger service initiation will be determined by DTS.
- Sea level: Sea level rise must be addressed conjunctively by federal, state, and municipal agencies. As per the City Charter, the Climate Change Commission is charged with gathering the latest science and information about the impact of climate change on Hawai'i, with a focus on O'ahu, and provides advice and recommendations to the Mayor, City Council, and executive departments as they draft policies and engage in planning for future climate scenarios. HART will work with these government agencies in addressing this issue, based on recommendations from the Climate Change Commission.

For more information, please visit the HART website at [www.honolulutransit.org](http://www.honolulutransit.org), call the project hotline on (808) 566-2299, or email a question to [info@honolulutransit.org](mailto:info@honolulutransit.org).

Chinatown Watch (CW): Fran Butera spoke to a report already shared with the Board, summarized below as an Annex; the full report for September 2020 is available on <https://chinatownwatch.com/reports/>. Butera reviewed results to date of the ongoing *Impacts of Homelessness in Chinatown* survey. The two key findings from the survey are [1] homelessness in Chinatown hurts 94% of Chinatown businesses, and [2] homelessness in Chinatown negatively affects 83% of customers' decisions to visit Chinatown. The study further concludes that that homelessness affects entire communities and not just unsheltered individuals. Butera urged meeting participants to read online the first-hand comments from merchants and others, and emphasized that mentally ill and substance-addicted individuals need treatment in a controlled and comprehensive setting, which Chinatown is not. For more information, please email [chinatownwatch@gmail.com](mailto:chinatownwatch@gmail.com).

Questions, comments, and concerns followed:

1. Report value: McDonald congratulated Butera on the hard work and effort involved in generating the report and encouraged her to continue such efforts.

**Chair Lye reiterated to the online gallery that members of the Board may move to extend time for discussion of matters on the meeting agenda.**

MEETING MINUTES

Chair Lye noted that delay in delivery by NCO of an initial draft version of minutes from the 6 August 2020 meeting precluded adoption of a vetted version of such this evening but that statutory deadlines addressing availability for public review of the minutes would be met.

Chair Lye recognized Secretary Moore to address amendment of the regular meeting minutes of 2 July 2020 to accommodate a request by Mr. Elefante. Moore declined to pursue such at this time in light of the late hour.

BOARD BUSINESS AND REPORTS

Appointment of representative to the Oahu Metropolitan Planning Organization (OahuMPO) Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC): Chair Lye noted that no volunteer had yet stepped forward to attend upcoming online meetings of the CAC.

**Armstrong moved without objection to defer action on this matter** and expressed hope that Mollring would continue in this role.

Chair's report: Hearings for complaints 2019-12 and 2020-01 against NB 13 and subsets of the members thereof have been set for 6:30 pm on Monday 28 September 2020<sup>c</sup> in the Kapālama Hale floor 1 conference room, 925 Dillingham Boulevard, Honolulu, HI 96817. All Board members are encouraged to participate and fully defend against accusations of wrongdoing.

Mr. Jackson Coley has returned as the assigned Neighborhood Assistant for NB 13; Chair Lye expressed gratitude for his assistance as well as that of those members of the Board who confirmed proficiency or participated in pre-meeting tests of the WebEx platform earlier in the week to facilitate the fully virtual meeting this evening,

Chair Lye encouraged constituents to continue to report perceived delays in delivery by USPS of NB 13-related documents.

In response to a reiteration of NB 13 adopted resolution 2020-004, Wes Frysztacki, Director of Department of Transportation Services, has noted that a request for updates from DTS would be more reasonable if it was quarterly; pursuit of such will continue.

Chair Lye noted that a motion from NB 13 to NCO requesting funding for an online repository to house meeting-related handouts and other collateral which would be accessible at any time by Members and constituents would be helpful.

A request for members of the community to wear a mask and join the Downtown–Chinatown Neighborhood Citizen Patrol each Tuesday evening at 8:00 pm, departing from the Diamond Head Tower lobby of Kukui Plaza, was reiterated.

Chair Lye encouraged Board members attending NB 13 meetings in-person to bring their own smart devices in order to view without neck-craning any content being projected on the front wall of the gallery behind the dais.

Treasurer's report: Treasurer Armstrong noted that aside from funds allocated toward audiovisual contractors, NB 13 is left with about \$35.00 a month. Printing and postage costs for July 2020 were approximately \$32.50, leaving approximately \$2.50. Armstrong noted a plan to work with NA Coley to remove duplicates from the NB 13 mailing lists and might send out a survey to those now receiving printed documents to confirm if such are indeed desired. Armstrong emphasized that if any Members anticipate a Board-related expenditure during the upcoming fiscal year, such should be relayed to him for planning purposes. Armstrong noted that the two remaining mayoral candidates should be asked of their respective visions for NCO and the Neighborhood Boards.

Questions, comments, and concerns followed:

1. Potential funding proposal: Chair Lye noted that transient connectivity issues experienced thus far by those helping host the virtual meeting—including Lye and McDonald—could be addressed by requests from NB 13 to NCO to pursue available CARES Act funds to procure borrowable Wi-Fi hotspots, as was mentioned by Commissioners during their meeting of 24 August 2020.

**Moore departed from the meeting at 9:14 pm; five members present.**

Board members' concerns:

Armstrong noted that the meeting had been long but information-rich.

McDonald expressed appreciation for efforts made to undertake a virtual meeting.

Future agenda items:

Discussion ensued on the matter of adding proposed items to future meeting agenda documents as per Neighborhood Plan §2-14-111(c)(2).

1. Local volunteer opportunities during hurricane season and COVID-19. Mary Finley, Senior Volunteer Recruitment Specialist [American Red Cross of Hawaii] (10 minutes)

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<sup>c</sup> Note that as of the composition of this document, the date for said hearings has since been moved to Monday 26 October 2020, retaining the same location and start-time. HRS §92-13 demands that any person who wilfully [sic] violates any provisions of [Sunshine Law] shall be guilty of a misdemeanor, and upon conviction, may be summarily removed from the board unless otherwise provided by law.

**Armstrong moved to request that the American Red Cross of Hawaii return to present at a future meeting of NB 13. The Motion WAS adopted 5-0-0 (AYE: Armstrong, Kamoshida, Lye, Ma, and McDonald; NAY: None; ABSTAIN: None).**

2. Resolution 2020-009: Censure of member Shubert-Kwock for behavior in violation of Neighborhood Plan §§2-14-105 and 2-14-117 (10 minutes)

**Member McDonald rose to a point of information** and requested that the Chair clarify the impending process. Chair Lye indicated that the Board has been charged with now determining if Resolution 2020-009 is to be added to a future meeting agenda, at which time said Resolution could then be adopted by the Body.

Armstrong read Resolution 2020-009 into the record as a matter of moving to add same to the next meeting of NB 13; discussion ensued.

- Clarification: McDonald wished to ensure that all members understood that the impending vote is one to place Resolution 2020-009 on the agenda for the October 2020 meeting of NB 13 and not to censure Member Chu Lan Shubert-Kwock at this moment. McDonald added he completely agreed with the statements within the resolution to censure, adding that the observed behaviors have been far beyond that which would be considered unbecoming. The Member in question has by electronic media attacked several other Members outside of meetings of the Board. McDonald explained that a censure has no consequence other than being a reprimand, and that if so censured, the Member would not sustain any punishment or loss of position; this is the method permitted by a Board to address behavior discordant with Neighborhood Plan §2-14-117.
- Considerations: Armstrong emphasized that he had made clear during the August 2020 meeting of NB 13 of his intent to pursue such a measure, and that it arose after considerable thought. Armstrong noted that this should be adequate to get the attention of the member and this it is not personal to him but instead about professionalism. It is one thing to be a critic and to keep fellow Members on their toes, but it is another thing to attack Members personally, to be rude, to be impatient, and to lack decorum. Armstrong stated that he felt a need to act, as both a citizen and a member of the Board.
- Scheduling: Kamoshida inquired as to the current depth of the October 2020 agenda. Chair Lye noted several potential but unconfirmed items of new business and that the acuity of such items would be taken into consideration.

**The Motion WAS NOT adopted 3-2-0 (AYE: Armstrong, Lye, and McDonald; NAY: Kamoshida, Ma; ABSTAIN: None).**

Armstrong advised the Board that he intended to return with another resolution on 1 October 2020. **McDonald rose to a point of order** and indicated that the Chair retains the ability to place items on the agenda at his discretion. Chair Lye clarified that the key parameter at play is the time relative to the forthcoming meeting of the Board by which a request for addition of an item to the agenda of said meeting is submitted, and that he would keep a close eye on his inbox for all such requests.

3. HLC Liquor licensing and Administrative Branch processes. HLC Commissioner (10 minutes)

**McDonald moved to request that efforts continue to secure attendance of a Commissioner of the Honolulu Liquor Commission at any future meeting of NB 13 in which such participation is possible.** Discussion ensued.

- HLC value: McDonald noted that HLC has the potential to help our district. Any opportunity to have HLC attend our meetings and respond to inquiries about policies and procedures should not be passed up.
- Differentiation: Chair Lye noted that representatives from the HLC Field Services Branch, although appreciated, have not been able to address the policy questions posed by members of the Board during recent appearances; hence the need exists to continue to request an audience with one or more Commissioners.
- Workload: McDonald noted that as the bars in Honolulu County remain closed, it was illogical for HLC to have deferred being able to attend the NB 13 meeting due to overwork.

**The Motion WAS adopted 5-0-0 (AYE: Armstrong, Kamoshida, Lye, Ma, and McDonald; NAY: None; ABSTAIN: None).**

#### ANNOUNCEMENTS

- The next regular meeting of the Downtown–Chinatown Neighborhood Board № 13 is scheduled for Thursday 1 October 2020 at Hawaii Pacific University, 1 Aloha Tower Drive, Multi-Purpose Room 3 at 6:00 pm; please monitor for updates regarding physical site accessibility and telepresence participation.
- The Downtown–Chinatown Neighborhood Citizen Patrol departs each Tuesday evening at 8:00 pm from the Diamond Head Tower lobby of Kukui Plaza. Please wear a mask, bring a friend, join the patrol, and help identify areas of concern within our Downtown–Chinatown community.
- ‘Ōlelo – Rebroadcasts of Downtown–Chinatown Neighborhood Board № 13 meetings are scheduled on ‘Ōlelo channel 49 for every third Thursday at 9:00 pm, as well as 6:00 am on the second and fourth Saturdays of each month. An archive of past meetings may be found on <http://olelo.org/olelonet/> and searching on <Downtown Chinatown>.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting adjourned at 9:49 pm.

Submitted by Jackson Coley, Public Relations Assistant  
Reviewed by James Skizewski, Executive Secretary  
Finalized by Kevin Lye, NB 13 Chair

#### **ANNEXES**

##### **Honolulu Fire Department Tips:**

###### *Contacting Emergency Providers*

- Provide pertinent and accurate information when calling 911.
- Ensure the location address is visible to responding personnel.
- Have someone signal the responding company when they are approaching the location.
- Keep a minimum of six feet from HFD responders and wear your face coverings to prevent the spread of COVID-19.
- Have family and friends who are not providing information to first responders remain away to allow the responders adequate space to address the emergency.
- Follow Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines.

##### **Honolulu Authority for Rapid Transportation (HART):**

September 2020

###### *Construction Progress*

The full 20-mile, 21 station rail system is 58.8% complete.

- West Oahu Stations Group (Kualaka’i, Keone’ae, Honouliuli) is 99.9% complete.
- Farrington Highway Stations Group (Ho’ae’ae, Pouhala, Halaulani) is 98.1% complete.
- Kamehameha Highway Stations Group (Waiawa, Kalauao, Halawa) is 95.9% complete.
- Kamehameha Highway resurfacing is 97.8% complete
- Airport Guideway and Stations Group (Makalapa, Lelepaua, Ahua, Kahauiki) is 74.1% complete
- Core Systems work is 68.7% complete

City Center Utilities Relocation (CCUR), about 4.8% complete, continues day and night utility relocation work to make way for the guideway and station structures. Currently Dillingham Boulevard, between Middle Street and Mokauea Street, is under controlled access, which means one east-bound and one west-bound lane is open to traffic. Work also continues in the Chinatown/Downtown area along Nimitz Highway, as well as work through Kakaako and Ala Moana along portions of Halekauwila, Queen and Kona streets.

###### *HART Business Outreach Programs*

HART encourages businesses along the rail alignment to take advantage of HART’s business outreach programs. These programs are designed to assist businesses affected by rail construction.

- Alternate Business Access Program – HART created fliers and posters to notify customers about alternative access routes to impacted businesses. These items are produced free of charge and includes custom information for each business

- “Open for Business” and Access Signage – HART branded custom signage to assist businesses with “Open for Business” or “Access Here” issues during construction.
- “Shop & Dine on the Line” – Website program for businesses along the rail alignment to announce discount specials.

For more information, please visit the HART website at [www.honolulutransit.org](http://www.honolulutransit.org). You can also call the HART 24-hour project hotline at (808) 566-2299, or email a question to [info@honolulutransit.org](mailto:info@honolulutransit.org).

#### **Chinatown Watch:**

##### *SURVEY: Homelessness in Chinatown Hurts 94% of Businesses*

This week, Chinatown community members conducted a survey of Chinatown business owners & customers entitled “Impacts of Homelessness in Chinatown”. The purpose was to let business owners say for themselves whether or not the homeless population in Chinatown is affecting them.

98 Chinatown business owners and 132 customers responded to the survey as of noon on 9/3/20.

- Overwhelmingly, these business owners (94%) report that homelessness in Chinatown hurts their business.
- Further, most customers (83%) says that homelessness in Chinatown negatively affects their decision to come here to shop and dine.
- 93% say the homeless situation in Chinatown has not improved in the past 3 years.

These results corroborate streams of anecdotal reports by merchants that Chinatown’s growing homeless crisis has been driving away customers, causing more shops to leave or close permanently.

The statistical data is compelling. Even more compelling and heartbreaking are the free responses from business owners and customers. They describe the squalid, dangerous conditions created by homeless, mentally ill and substance-addicted people living on Chinatown streets with no sanitation. For example:

“I don’t feel safe. There are many drug addicts and/or mental illness individuals roaming the streets. Many areas are filthy and smell of urine. I grew up here and used to shop the markets and stores in Chinatown weekly. Lucky if I go once in 6 months now it has become an unsafe and unpleasant place to shop.”

“My customers are afraid to come to Chinatown because of the homeless, myself included. Our store windows are boarded up because the people loitering here have broke the business windows.”

Please see 10 pages of free responses in the full September 2020 report at <https://chinatownwatch.com/reports/>

##### *Take-Aways from the “Impacts of Homelessness” Survey*

- Homelessness in Chinatown is a zero sum proposition. No small business community can survive where homeless, mentally unstable people freely occupy the public spaces.
- Homelessness affects ENTIRE COMMUNITIES, not just the unsheltered individuals. It is senseless to adopt policies that ignore community impact.
- Shops & markets, restaurants and bars, salons, lei stands and bakeries NEED CUSTOMERS. When a business district becomes squalid and dangerous, even loyal customers stop going there.
- Mentally ill and substance-addicted people NEED TREATMENT in a controlled, comprehensive setting - not a small, historic live/work neighborhood.
- Homeless people DESERVE COMPASSION. However, allowing them to live like animals on the street is not compassion.
- Chinatown’s workers and residents DESERVE COMPASSION as well. Our community has borne the brunt of the City’s failed homeless policies. However, we are hard-working and resourceful. We can recover if the City will TRULY commit to Chinatown’s revitalization. Move ROL and its clients to a suitable setting away from Chinatown, and let our community heal

##### *Action Steps*

The full report lists steps that City administrators and citizens can take now to improve conditions in Chinatown.

##### *Full Report Online*

Please see the full September 2020 report and archived past reports at <https://chinatownwatch.com/reports/> Mahalo.